

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

505 VAN NESS AVENUE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94102-3298



April 17, 2019

Kelly Brown
2-1-1 Director
Interface Children & Family Services
4001 Mission Oaks Blvd, Suite I
Camarillo, CA 93012

SUBJECT: Initial CPUC questions regarding disaster-only 2-1-1 proposal

Dear Ms. Brown:

The Communications Division (CD) of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) has performed an initial review of your submitted proposal dated March 29, 2019. We thank you for your interest in providing disaster-only 2-1-1 service in the areas of California currently unserved by 2-1-1 dialing.

After reviewing your application, CD has the following questions and concerns which require your response:

1. Regarding your response to Question 2.8, who are the “trusted 2-1-1 providers”? Please provide a list of these providers, even if non-exhaustive.

During large disaster or emergency events call and text volume can surge with thousands of community members seeking critical information. Interface has partnered with the several large 2-1-1 contact centers around the nation to respond to fires, hurricanes, volcanos, ice storms, flooding, and mass casualty events.

Starting two years ago, UWW accepted the responsibility to coordinate national 2-1-1 disaster responses and facilitates the immediate disaster response of over a dozen 2-1-1 Contact Centers nationally.

Along with United Way Worldwide’s disaster response network, these are some the trusted 2-1-1 partners we would request assistance from should call or text handling support be needed during a large or extended response.

- A. 2-1-1 Texas
- B. 2-1-1 Connecticut
- C. 2-1-1 North Carolina
- D. 2-1-1 Alameda
- E. Nevada 2-1-1 (State)
- F. 2-1-1 Alabama
- G. 2-1-1 Hawaii
- H. 2-1-1 NE Louisiana

2. Regarding your response to Question 2.10, the recording as proposed is insufficient. The

recording must be able to forward the caller to the appropriate responder in some fashion. How do you propose to do this?

The telephone recorded message will include an option to transfer to a live 2-1-1 agent allowing for a report of a possible disaster with an immediate warm transfer or supervisor call to a designated emergency contact in the county.

If preferred, the IVR system can be designed to forward to a designated 24/7 county number where a report of suspected emergency or disaster can be made.

3. Regarding your response to Question 2.13
- a. Again, who are the “trusted 2-1-1 providers?

- A. 2-1-1 Texas
- B. 2-1-1 Connecticut
- C. 2-1-1 North Carolina
- D. 2-1-1 Alameda
- E. Nevada 2-1-1 (State)
- F. 2-1-1 Alabama
- G. 2-1-1 Hawaii
- H. 2-1-1 NE Louisiana

- b. What is the United Way Worldwide network system?

Over 50% of the nation’s 200 2-1-1’s are operated by or heavily supported by local United Way organizations across the country. United Way Worldwide has taken a unique leadership role in organizing and promoting the development of 2-1-1’s and deploys a number of high-level UWW staff dedicated to 2-1-1’s growth and stability nationally. Starting two years ago, UWW accepted the responsibility to coordinate national 2-1-1 disaster responses and facilitates the immediate disaster response of over a dozen 2-1-1 Contact Centers nationally. This network of 2-1-1’s has provided disaster coverage in the following nationally declared disasters.

Hurricanes- Michael, Florence, Harvey, Irma, & Maria.
Fires- Thomas, Carr, Camp, Hill, Woolsey, North Bay.

4. Regarding your response to Question 2.15, TTY is mentioned. What about TDD (telecommunications devices for the deaf) services?

The terms TTY and TDD are interchangeable and our system is a TTY/TDD capable.

5. Regarding your response to Question 3.2 (database):

- a. iCarol is used for 13 counties while Wellsky is used for one county. Your application mentions that your agency manages 2-1-1 services for 22 counties. What is used in the eight remaining counties?

iCarol is used for 21 counties and Interface handles their calls, texts, and manages the databases of 13 of them. The remaining 8 manage their own data while Interface handles calls and texts.

1 county uses Wellsky and Interface handles calls, texts, and manages the database.

- b. What is Wellsky?

Wellsky, is an information and referral software system used to make coordinated referrals between service providers with permissions-based access to client information. It is widely used across the nation as a homeless coordinated entry management system and several 2-1-1s use it for all 2-1-1 work as well.

- c. It states that initial set-up fees are \$2,000 per county and ongoing fees are \$1,000 per year per county. What do these fees pay for?
These fees cover the estimated initial new county resource build-out and 2-1-1 State and National database system expansion and API costs associated with implementation of this project.

- 6. Regarding your responses to Questions 3.3 (cloud telephony) and 3.4 (text messaging), what do these fees pay for?
These estimated fees cover the initial build-out of the telephony IVR system, phone number provisioning fees, and any increased telephony costs associated with this implementation project.

Regarding your response to Question 3.5 (disaster preparedness activities), while monthly and quarterly meetings may keep participants updated to the latest developments, they can be exhausting and lead to drop-offs in participation over time. Please explain why you propose to meet so often.

Year 1 of implementation requires the most meeting time to facilitate the build-out of the database, website, coordinated entry and phone systems, and the initial trainings for use of the disaster only 2-1-1 system. All 6 monthly meetings may not be required for each county depending on the complexity of their disaster resources and county disaster procedures. But, we are prepared to provide as much support and meeting time as is necessary to ensure that by the end of this implementation each of the 19 counties will have a complete set of their local, state, and national disaster/emergency resources, the 2-1-1 dialing code activated with all telephony switching completed, a 2-1-1 guided search website, 24/7 coverage using the 2-1-1 dialing code for disaster reporting and response via call and 898211 or custom keyword for text, and access to a coordinated disaster assistance system providing organized communication and reporting between county disaster service providers about individual and community needs, losses, assistance application status, and recovery progress.

Depending on the amount of new developments and availability of participants, quarterly implementation meetings can be done via phone or recorded webinar. These quarterly meetings will serve to keep the new county and 2-1-1 teams aware of the disaster procedures, test the functionality of the systems, and provide a place and time where any new changes in disaster response procedures or new disaster resources can be discussed and updated in the database system and on the associated website.

Annual implementation tabletop disaster exercises will bring the counties together with Interface to review disaster responses and to work through a mock disaster as a team.

| | | | | |
|-------------------|------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| Meetings/Check-in | Months 1-6 | Months 6-12 | Months 12-24 | Month 24-36 |
|-------------------|------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Monthly Phone Call or Webinar | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Quarterly Phone Call or Webinar | 0 | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Annual In-Person | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

1. Regarding your response to Question 3.6 (website):
 - a. Does the website provide any means for visitors to provide info to responders? If so, how?
The website can be configured to support messaging to responders via email or online forms for questions, comments, or property damage reporting with these emails or forms either sent to the county disaster services provider or handled by Interface staff. Comments on resources can also be made via the website so that resource specialists can be notified of needed changes or updates.
 - b. Why are the ongoing costs more than the setup costs?
Year 1 includes an estimated \$500 in estimated set-up costs per county to pay for initial development of their local site, and \$1000 for hosting and update costs. Years 2-3 include the \$1000 hosting and update costs only. During implementation we will work with the counties to explore options for local or regional guided search sites, as well as custom additions like online forms for damage report collection or disaster recovery resource pages etc.
2. Regarding your response to Question 3.7 (miscellaneous):
 - a. On page 12, what is a “local lead agency” and how is that determined?
The lead agency is either the county or a local CBO that is interested in implementing disaster only 2-1-1 services with Interface, the lead agency would hold the 2-1-1 dialing code and have ownership of the local 2-1-1 resource data, and the 2-1-1 website created during this implementation project.
 - b. On page 13, please elaborate on these funding streams. What are these funding streams?
2-1-1 is funded differently in every county but the funding streams generally consist of a combination of individual city, county (HSA, Behavioral Health, general operating support), United Way, local community foundation, and other available local, state and national grant opportunities.
3. Regarding your proposed budget:
 - a. Please explain the “indirect .15” line item under “Total Expenses.”

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| TOTAL PROGRAMS | 7,192,395 |
| Administration | 1,317,215 |
| TOTAL BUDGET | 8,509,610 |
| Admin % | 15% |

- b. Please explain in detail the “fringe benefits” line item under “Total Staff Expenses.”

Fringe Benefits as a % of Salaries

| | |
|-----------------|--------|
| Fica & Medicare | 7.65% |
| Health Benefits | 13.19% |
| Pension Plan | 0.56% |
| Unemployment | 1.60% |
| Total | 23.00% |

- c. Please provide greater details and break down your listed costs. For example, please provide detailed line items for the database systems regarding setup, maintenance, subscription fees, etc. Please attach any necessary supporting materials for us to understand your response.

All costs are estimates based on quotes received from vendors for previous similar project costs. Interface will work with each county to create a custom implementation plan based on their county's unique needs and actual costs will be billed as they are incurred.

- d. In accordance with SB 1212, the CPUC may only pay for staff time spent on implementation. Only staff positions involved in disaster-only 2-1-1 implementation may be included in the proposed budget. Please explain how the staff expenses identified in Years 2 and 3 are implementation expenses.

Implementing disaster only 2-1-1 coverage for 19 counties is a big project that will require several months to complete. Year 1 staffing includes a team of 4 that will support each lead agency with the 2-1-1 dialing code application and telephony switching process while also building the phone and data systems to support call and text handling on the backend. Years 2 and 3 the team will shrink down to 3, assuming the bulk of the technology buildout will be nearly complete by that time. The remaining 3 staff will be working to locate, contact, and enter all the disaster and emergency related resources for all 19 counties and to train the lead agencies and other local disaster service providers on how the 2-1-1 contact center, database, website and coordinated assistance systems can be used to support in the event of disaster or emergency.

Please respond to these inquiries by **close of business Tuesday, April 30, 2019**. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me by email at chasel.lee@cpuc.ca.gov or by phone at (415) 703-2844.

Sincerely,

Chasel Lee
Regulatory
Analyst

CC: Eric Van Wambeke
Joanne Leung
Karo Serle

